



## CMC AND SMMC VISIT SOUTHWESTERN AFGHANISTAN

In a whirlwind trip throughout southwestern Afghanistan, Gen. James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, and Sgt. Maj. Micheal P. Barrett, Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, visited every Marine battalion serving in Helmand province, July 17. During their six-stop tour, they spoke to Marines, thanked them for their service and answered questions about the future of the Corps. The Commandant praised the Marines' work in securing Helmand province, which was an insurgent stronghold three years ago. There, Marines used a dual approach -- combating the insurgents, while simultaneously training the Afghan National Security Force to become self-sufficient. "We brag about you every chance we get," Amos said. "We talk about what you've done out here...and how you've stabilized [the area]." Their tour included stops at Camp Leatherneck, Forward Operating Base (FOB) Payne, FOB Geronimo, FOB Jackson, FOB Zeebrugge and Combat Outpost Shir Ghazi.



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## PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Marine Corps Sgt. Zachary Stinson of Chambersburg, Pa., a double amputee, second from left, joins other military personnel and members of the Olympic Men's basketball team for the playing of the National Anthem before an exhibition game against Brazil at the Verizon Center, Washington, D.C., July 16. *(Photo by Toni L. Sandys/The Washington Post)*

## CALM IS THE NEW NORM IN SANGIN, AFGHANISTAN



Not so long ago, gunfire was a constant sound throughout Afghanistan. However, recently a new sense of calm has taken over, demonstrating the success of the Marines' efforts. On a recent patrol in Sangin, Afghanistan, Marines from 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment only heard celebratory machine-gun fire from a nearby wedding -- a far cry from the realities just a few months ago. A combination of increased local jobs, an energetic new district chief of police, a particularly small poppy harvest and increased surveillance capabilities have all helped keep the peace, in addition to 1,400 Afghan security force personnel serving in the district. "In our area, it's stable and calm," said platoon commander 1st Lt. William McCabe. "I feel I could walk around without a flak jacket, with just my rifle." U.S. Marines will continue to operate in Sangin until most American combat troops leave Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

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## MARINES CREATE LAW ENFORCEMENT BATTALIONS

The Marine Corps' reputation as a trail-blazer is solidified again with the creation of three law enforcement battalions, the first in military history. The goal of these battalions is to consolidate the military police (MP) and their collective knowledge in one place. While the Corps has had military police battalions since World War II, these new law enforcement units are trained to handle a wider range of situations, including terrorist crimes and drug trafficking, all while having the capability to deploy quickly as America's crisis response force. Each battalion is comprised of roughly 500 military police officers and dozens of military working dogs. "Over the past 11 years of combat operations in Iraq and





Afghanistan...there has been a growing appreciation and a demand for, on the part of the warfighter, the unique skills and capabilities that MPs bring," said Maj. Jan Durham, commander of the 1st Law Enforcement Battalion at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

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## ELITE MARINE UNITS TO RECEIVE NEW PISTOLS



Adding to their arsenal, the Marine Corps' special operation and reconnaissance units are set to receive the next generation of .45-caliber pistols. The new gun, dubbed the Marine Corps Special Operations Command (MARSOC) M45 Close Quarter Battle Pistol, will be an upgraded version of the pistols currently used by the Corps' elite units. "It's more efficient to replace the guns over time instead of attempting to completely rebuild them," said Charles Clark III, who oversees infantry weapons requirements at the Corps' Combat

Development and Integration Office at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va. The most visible difference will be the tan color of the weapon, which, along with the cercoat and stainless steel finish, will help reduce reflection, prevent corrosion and keep the pistol from eroding in harsh conditions. Colt Defense, who was awarded the contract last week, aims to have the new pistols in the hands of Marines by 2017.

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## SENATE PASSES CARING FOR CAMP LEJEUNE FAMILY ACT OF 2012

The United States Senate unanimously passed the Caring for Camp Lejeune Family Act of 2012, July 17, which will help as many as 75,000 sick Marine veterans and their families who were exposed to contaminated water at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., from 1957 to 1987. The legislation requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide healthcare for those who lived or worked on the base during that time and now have certain diseases and conditions resulting from



exposure to the contaminated water. "While I wish we could have accomplished this years ago, we now have the opportunity to do the right thing for the thousands of Navy and Marine veterans and their families who were harmed during their service to our country," said Sen. Richard Burr (R-N.C.). If the House of Representatives votes on the bill before their August recess, President Barack Obama could sign the bill into law by the end of the summer.

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[Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water Website](#)



## TRANSITION

### RECRUITMILITARY VET JOB FAIR COMING SOON

Mark your calendars for the RecruitMilitary/Modern Day Marine Veteran Career Fair, which will be held Sept. 26, at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va. The career workshop is part of the 2012 Modern Day Marine Military Exposition and aims to connect businesses, non-profit organizations and government agencies with service members transitioning out of the military. "With more than 500 exhibiting companies, the expo is a perfect venue to address the issue [of finding a civilian job] head-on," said Drew Myers, CEO of RecruitMilitary. The annual expo attracts thousands of visitors each year, including hundreds of Marines, Sailors and other service members.

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### VETS TO BENEFIT FROM UPDATED TAP



For the first time since its inception 22 years



ago, the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) is getting an overhaul to better accommodate the needs of transitioning service members. Key changes include one-on-one counseling and separate tracks for pursuing higher education, starting a business or finding a civilian job.

Additionally, as part of the facelift, it will be renamed Transition Goals Planning and Success (Transition GPS). Despite all the changes, the goal remains the same -- to help prepare service members for civilian life

as they depart from the military. The program changes were announced earlier this week at the Veterans of Foreign Wars National Convention in Reno, Nev., and garnered the support of the Commander in Chief. "Our American veterans have the skills America needs," said President Barack Obama. "If you want somebody who gets the job done, then hire a vet."

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## SEMPER FI

### MARINE TO TACKLE ONE MILLION PUSH-UPS IN A YEAR

What started as a New Year's Resolution for Sgt. Enrique Trevino -- to complete one million push-ups in one year -- is now a mission to raise awareness and funds for wounded warriors. It's a lofty ambition. In order to reach one million push-ups by Jan. 1, 2013, Trevino must complete an average of 2,732 push-ups a day, but he's

determined to reach his goal. "About a week into it, I kinda told myself instead of me just doing this for myself, I wanna benefit my brothers and sisters who've been injured in combat since 9/11," he said. Now halfway through the year, he has raised nearly \$40,000 for the Wounded Warrior Project. But for Trevino, it is still all about the Marines: "The Marines around me, they're really supportive. Sometimes they'll get down and do some push-ups with me,"



he said.

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**Wounded Warrior Project Push-up Ticker**

